

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MANAMA 02729 241020Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----010097 241023Z /10

P R 240901Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5546

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

ANDMBASSY LAGOS 11

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USUN NEW YORK 138

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

SECRET

SECRET

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AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

S E C R E T MANAMA 2729

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MOPS, EAIR, MMOL, BA, ET

SUBJECT: SOVIET AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA: GULF STATES TO MEET

REF: MANAMA 2696

1. FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEVELOPMENT MINISTER SHIRAWI, LATTER RESPONSIBLE FOR AVIATION MATTERS, TOLD ME DEC 22 THAT IRAN AND LOWER GULF STATES STILL VERY CONCERNED ABOUT CONTINUING SOVIET USE OF GULF AIR CORRIDOR TO SUPPORT ARMS BUILD UP IN ETHIOPIA. GULF STATES ARE IN TOUCH ON SUBJECT AND MEETING IS PLANNED FOR TEHRAN WEEK OF DEC 26 TO DISCUSS SITUATION, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO GULF CORRIDOR ITSELF WHICH, ACCORDING TO SHIRAWI, ACTUALLY PASSES OVER UAE TERRITORY. SHIRAWI SAID HE WOULD ATTEND MEETING FOR GOB.

2. SHIRAWI SAID SOVIETS ARE "PLAYING BY THE RULES" BY FILING FLIGHT PLANS FOR BASRA-ADEN-BASRA. PROBLEM FOR UAE IS THAT CORRIDOR GOES OVER ITS TERRITORY AND WHEN UAE TOWER OBJECTS SOVIET AIRCRAFT SWING OUT OF CORRIDOR TO PASS OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS, THUS CREATING HAZARD TO CIVIL AVIATION IN AREA. IRANIANS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE COMPLAINED TO SOVIET PILOTS, THOUGH GROUNDS FOR PROTEST NOT CLEAR TO GOB, WHO SIMPLY REFUSE TO RESPOND.

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3. BOTH FONMIN AND SHIRAWI EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT "SOMETHING BE DONE" TO HALT SOVIET MOVES IN ETHIOPIA. THEY FEARED NOT ONLY SOMALI DEFEAT BUT ALSO POSSIBLE RENEWAL OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR PDRY AGAINST OMAN. FONMIN SAID OMANIS VERY DISTURBED THAT PDRY'S PRICE FOR AIDING SOVIET AIMS IN HORN MIGHT BE SOVIET ARMS AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR NEW WAR IN DHOFAR. FONMIN SAID HE WOULD GIVE ME FIGURES ON NUMBERS OF SOVIET FLIGHTS IN GULF CORRIDOR. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR

INFO WE HAVE PROVIDED AND ASKED TO BE KEPT INFORMED.

4. COMMENT. GOB OFFICIALS NOT REALLY CLEAR ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL DISCUSS IN TEHRAN MEETING, NOR ARE THEY CERTAIN WHO, IN ADDITION BAHRAIN AND IRAN, WILL ATTEND. I SUSPECT THAT ONE SUBSTANTIVE TOPIC ON AGENDA WILL BE CHANGE IN GULF AIR CORRIDOR ITSELF, AND PERHAPS CHANGE IN REGIONAL AIR CONTROLLER RESPONSIBILITIES. IN VIEW OF HIGH LEVEL OF INTEREST AMONG GULF STATES SUGGEST GULF POSTS BE KEPT

INFORMED OF SOVIET AIRLIFT, SOVIET-PDY
ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRESS OF EVENTS IN SOMALI-
ETHIOPIAN FIGHTING.
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